

THE JOYS OF SATURATED COLOR - At right is a painting from American Expressionist Childe Hassam, that displays an absolute fearlessness in the use of bright, even riotous color. Also note, amid his small dashing brush strokes, the sparkle of snippets of white paper showing through.

Below, Lars Johnsson has made splendid use of evocative soft-edged wet-in-wet washes for the middle and background areas. You have to relinquish the urge to control every stroke if you want these kinds of happy accidents to occur.



Fig. 91 Isles of Shoals Garden, 1892. Watercolor on paper, 19 3/16 x 13 7/16 in. (50.8 x 35.2 cm). National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; Gift of John Gellatly

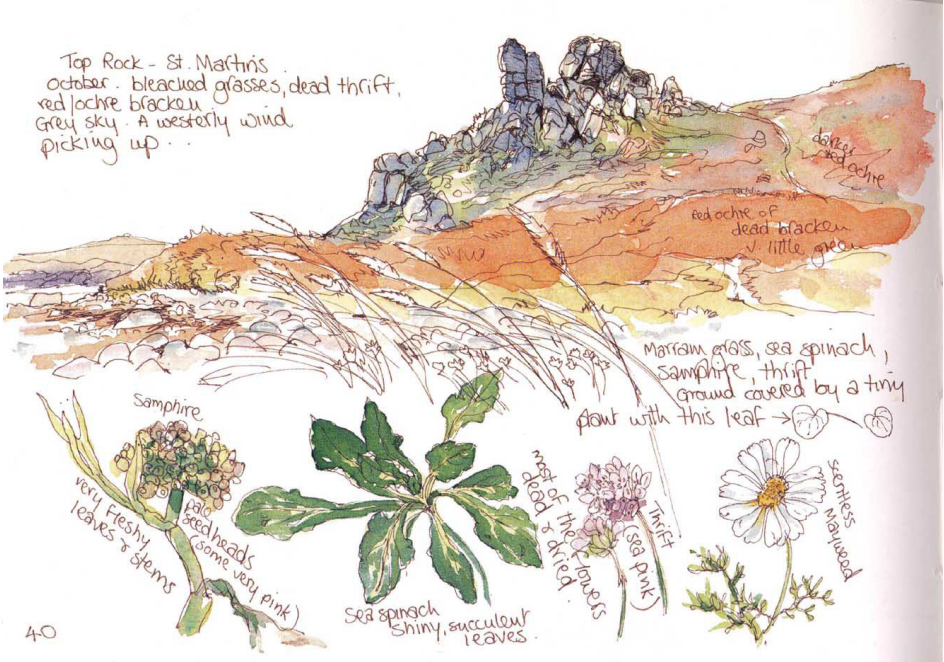


Another sketch by Sue Lewington, quick and fresh, complementary red-orange and blue-violet, fearless color. I also love the way she fills the sky wash around the white box, allowing the little sketch within it to shine..

SOME WATERCOLOR EXAMPLES OF USE TO US...

At right, Sue Lewington brings an unaffected, loose style to her sketchbooks, using an underdrawing of pen, with bright and unfussy watercolor washes added on the spot.

Below the great Swedish nature artist Gunnar Bruswitz shows his genius at simplifying shapes, allowing them to be descriptive without added detail.



He also has a very clear sense of dark and light, and is careful about identifying and emphasizing the darker areas against very light areas. This may look like a dashed-off piece, and because he is so skilled it probably didn't take him all that long. But the clear decision-making about where to place the darkest areas reveals his accurate and confident ability to SEE.

These are both good examples for us, because in the field and in our sketchbooks, we are more likely to be drawing, and adding some color if we wish, than we will be carrying a studio's worth of watercolor equipment along with us. Unless they are made expressly for watercolor, the journals we use are not ideal for extensive, wet washes.



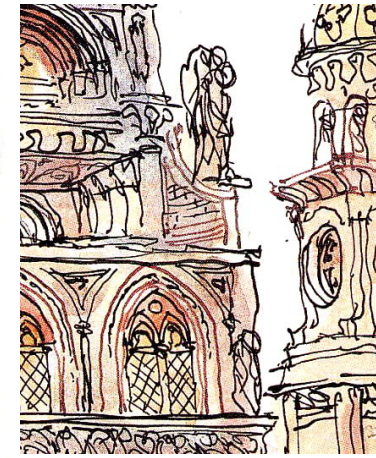
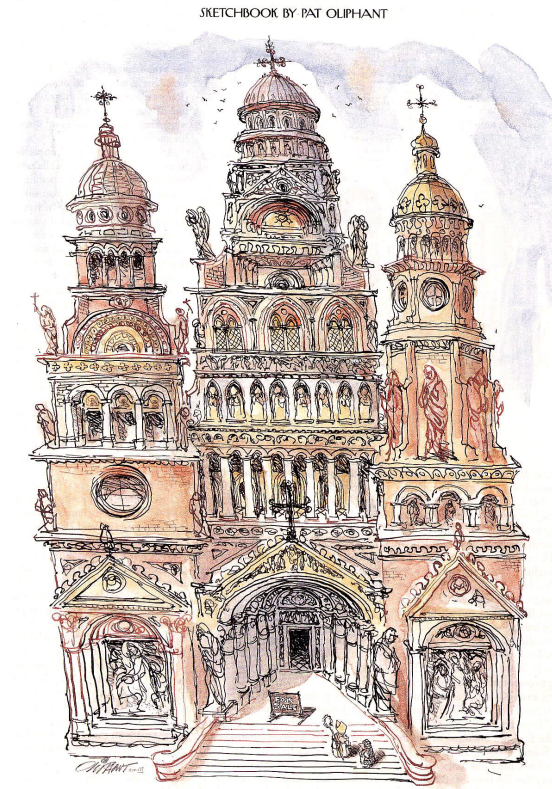


The power of monochrome: below is a wash drawing by W.H. Holmes, who traveled with the early surveys to Yellowstone. He was a geologist, and his acute awareness of landforms is clearly on display here. He uses values of a single color to help differentiate landscape features, but lets the drawing do the work.



The journal page on the left, by Enrique Flores, is actually "drawn" with watercolor. He uses a single brush as a drawing tool, as well as a way to apply areas of color. He's using a water brush, actually - they are very good at keeping a sharp, flexible point.

At right is a treatment that couldn't be more different - many dense pen lines, with a touch of watercolor added only for enhancement and to unify the whole piece. It's by the cartoonist Oliphant, whose drawing style I love as well, for its undisciplined line.



This detail from the Oliphant drawing next to it shows the quirky (but accurate) quality of his pen-work.



Above is a detail from a famous sketch by Thomas Moran, along the Green River in Wyoming. He is working on a heavy sheet of tan paper, and making good use of its warm color. Using both layers of transparent watercolor, as well as opaque watercolor (gouache) allows him to add tones that are both brighter and darker than the middle value of the paper. I am especially enchanted by the little band of violet blue behind the base of the cottonwoods!